

## **Introduction to Recycling Teacher Background Information (SC000500)**

### **Content and Methods**

Recycling is a method through which a consumer society saves resources and minimizes the space needed for disposal. While most communities only recycle paper, plastic, metal, and glass, there are many other opportunities for young people to practice the habits of conservation. Batteries, computers, cell phones, and televisions should be recycled because they can release toxic chemicals and contain rare metals. Paper can be reused, and consumers can demand simpler packaging on their products. There are many examples of recycling in a child's world.

This unit concentrates on the science process skills of observation and classification. They can be encouraged to describe their observations in words and pictures, and classify the waste products they produce. When students investigate the recycling of plastics, they can also learn to identify symbols on product labels. Helping them identify symbols for dangerous chemicals is an added benefit.

### **Advanced Preparation**

1. Schedule a field trip to a recycling center or invite a representative to present at the school.
2. Arrange for a visit by the school/district custodian to discuss school waste and recycling plans already in place.
3. Invite the principal to the classroom to present him/her with possible school-wide recycling plans.
4. Send a letter requesting several recycled or reusable items.
5. Send a letter requesting a plain white T-shirt for each child. Or if this is not a possibility you may have to purchase them.

### **Safety Precautions**

Discuss picking up litter (broken glass, unsafe objects, etc.) with the children. Another safety precaution is how to handle plastic bags (not on head, around mouth, or nose, etc.) Let parents know you are doing this unit, since a child might decide to go through trash at home.

## Teaching Resources

Make two large charts similar to the one shown here. Use one chart after reading the book, *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky*, and the other after taking a walk around the school grounds.

Natural Resource	Manufactured Material

<b>What Is Pollution?</b>		
Land	Air	Water

<b>Clean Earth</b>	<b>Polluted Earth</b>

### **The Lifecycle of a Piece Of Trash**

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### **Types of Waste**

Glass	Paper	Plastic	Metal	Wood	Food

### Recycling

<b>Paper</b>	<b>Plastic</b>	<b>Glass</b>	<b>Metal</b>

### Packaging

	<b>Small Amount of Packaging</b>	<b>Large Amount of Packaging</b>
<b>Cookie A</b> # of cookies _____		
<b>Cookie B</b> # of cookies _____		
<b>Cookie C</b> # of cookies _____		

### **School Waste**

Reduce	Recycle	Reuse

Send a letter home to parents requesting various reusable items. A letter similar to this needs to be sent home several days or weeks prior to doing this lesson.

Dear Family,

Our class is beginning an exciting science unit on reducing, reusing and recycling. As a part of this unit, we will need many “trash” items. If you can send any of these items to school with your child, we would greatly appreciate it. All items must be cleaned prior to sending to school. Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

pizza boxes	milk cartons or jugs
egg cartons	cardboard tubes
Styrofoam meat trays	Kleenex boxes
shoe boxes	2-liter plastic bottles
margarine tubs	plastic soap dispensers
film canisters	yogurt containers
magazines	plastic laundry containers
brown paper bags (large and small)	

Our study of reducing, reusing, and recycling will be fun and exciting for everyone. Thank you in advance for being a part of your child’s learning experience.

Sincerely,

Kids Taking Care



Of The Earth

<b>Being Wise</b>	<b>Being Wasteful</b>